





# WEST COAST Sports Fisheries



## Introduction

The West Coast Fish and Game Region extends from Kahurangi point, north of Karamea, to Avenua point south of Haast. In between lies some 2m hectares, much of it in wilderness. With the pressures of modern life, increasing numbers of anglers rate isolation, peace and solitude almost as highly as the opportunity to fish for wild trout. On the West Coast these attributes exist in abundance along with a surprising diversity of angling opportunity.

While the Region offers abundant opportunities for specialist methods such as fly fishing for sighted trout, there are also excellent prospects for novice or intending anglers using bait or spinning gear.

Brown trout and Salmon occupy a diverse range of habitats between the mountains and the sea including lakes, rivers, spring fed river tributaries and estuaries. With almost 90% of the Region in public ownership barriers to access for anglers are, for the most part, dictated only by climate and terrain. In the case of waterways with private land adjoining, where there is no marked access please ask at the nearest farm house.



The information in this pamphlet is limited to more popular or accessible waters. It is presented on the basis that from an angling perspective a feature of the Region is the opportunity for visitors to create their own special experience. From a management perspective Fish & Game deliberately avoids directing anglers to many of the more sensitive fisheries. This is because to over promote such places would be to threaten the very attributes that make them special - a lack of other anglers. Accordingly, to get the most out of a fishing trip to the West Coast visitors are recommended to acquire the range of West Coast topographical maps and a willingness to explore new places. For

## WEST COAST REGION



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a full list, and GPS locations, of Angler Access points please visit [www.fishandgame.org.nz](http://www.fishandgame.org.nz)

### Fishing techniques

Many of the rivers mentioned support trout populations that fluctuate depending on the time of year. The usual pattern is for the lower reaches of the major rivers to carry more fish in spring and early summer, after which trout move upstream to occupy mid-headwater habitats. Smaller streams generally fish best in early season before water temperatures increase and trout become active for shorter periods. Evening fishing is usually best in mid to late summer when insect hatches peak. Sea Run Salmon turn up in the regions lakes and rivers from January with numbers peaking in March. River fishing and trolling in South Westland lakes is popular.

### Spinning

Spin anglers are advised to use light line (3kg max.) and small (7g) lures where circumstances permit, especially in clear water and during low flows. Popular colours are green and gold, black and gold, black, and white or silver near river mouths.

### Bait fishing

Bait fishing is permitted in all waters. Snellet and large bullies are often very effective in tidal areas.

### Fly fishing

A range of nymph sizes and weights is recommended depending on the water. Heavy hare and copper, stonefly or similar bead head patterns are useful for deeper headwater pools and riffles, while size 12-16 is necessary for spring fed streams and side bars where a more delicate presentation is required. Good streamer patterns for estuary fishing include Parsons Glory, Grey Ghost and Yellow Dorothy. After dark try Red Shadow, Black Hairy Dog or Dark Hopes Silvery. Commonly used dry flies include Deer Hair, Mole Fly or a similar good floater for big water, Adams, Khaki Queen, coachman or Blue Dun for smaller water. As always fly size and presentation are the keys to success.

### Bait fishing

A popular method for trout and salmon in lakes. In South Westland lakes deeper trolling is recommended for both trout and salmon when surface temperatures are warm. A down rigger or 4-5 colours of headline is useful. For salmon large zed-spinners in silver, yellow or white are a popular choice. For trout a toby type lure in black or green and gold is commonly used. Hurling a large streamer (type lure over shallow weed beds can bring success, especially in low light conditions.

## Regulations

Please consult the West Coast section in the South Island Sportfishing Regulation Guide for up to date information on the regulations. These booklets are issued free with every fishing licence issued. If you require this booklet, visit any sports store or other agent displaying the Fish & Game sign for a free copy.



## Access

If you are wanting further information about access you can visit [www.fishandgame.org.nz](http://www.fishandgame.org.nz) for more Fish and Game access points along with other useful information. If you're looking to get off the beaten track by not fishing one of our access points and are unsure if you have legal access, [www.walkingaccess.govt.nz](http://www.walkingaccess.govt.nz) is the site to visit. The New Zealand Walking Access Commission maps outdoor access, provides information to the public, oversees a code of responsible conduct, helps to resolve disputes and negotiates new access.

## Sports fish Licences

Trout, salmon and perch are all legally classified as sports fish and a licence is required to fish for them. In most circumstances persons apprehended fishing without a licence will be prosecuted. Licence outlets are established in all main centres and most smaller settlements, however visitors may find it convenient to purchase their licence via the internet. Visit [www.fishandgame.org.nz](http://www.fishandgame.org.nz) for easy purchase options.

## 10 quick tips for boat fishing success

1. First familiarise yourself with the intended fishing area.
2. Drop offs, river and stream deltas and edges are usually prime areas.
3. Abrupt changes in lake bed shape such as holes or pinnacles tend to concentrate fish.
4. Use a sounder or land marks to stay at the chosen depth and to plan ahead your trolling path.
5. Match trace length and weight to water clarity. Generally the clearer the water the longer and lighter the trace.
6. The best strike zone is within 2m of the bottom.
7. Vary trolling speed and direction.
8. When a trout is hooked, slow the boat and only stop when the fish is under control.
9. Re-fish areas where trout have been hooked as lake fish often congregate around food sources.
10. Lead line or downriggers improve success rates when targeting Salmon in lakes.



## CENTRAL WESTLAND

Lake Brunner is the region's most popular angling destination but the area surrounding it is also building an angling reputation. The lower Grey River and tributaries contain some of the region's most accessible and productive trout fisheries.

### Kapitea/Kumara Reservoir

Turn off SHWY 73 at Dillmanstown to reach lower lake. Continue along Goldsborough Road and take first turn left to get to upper lake. Wading possible around shallow margins but dinghy is best. Trout typically ½kg to 1kg but numerous. Good summer evening hatches. Careful spinning with light gear is recommended as is dry fly fishing.

### Taramakau

Good access for most of its length off SH 73. Brown trout are resident throughout, some rainbows are present in upper section. Salmon from January to April. The stretch of river between Jacksons and Kumara is ideal for quick stops.



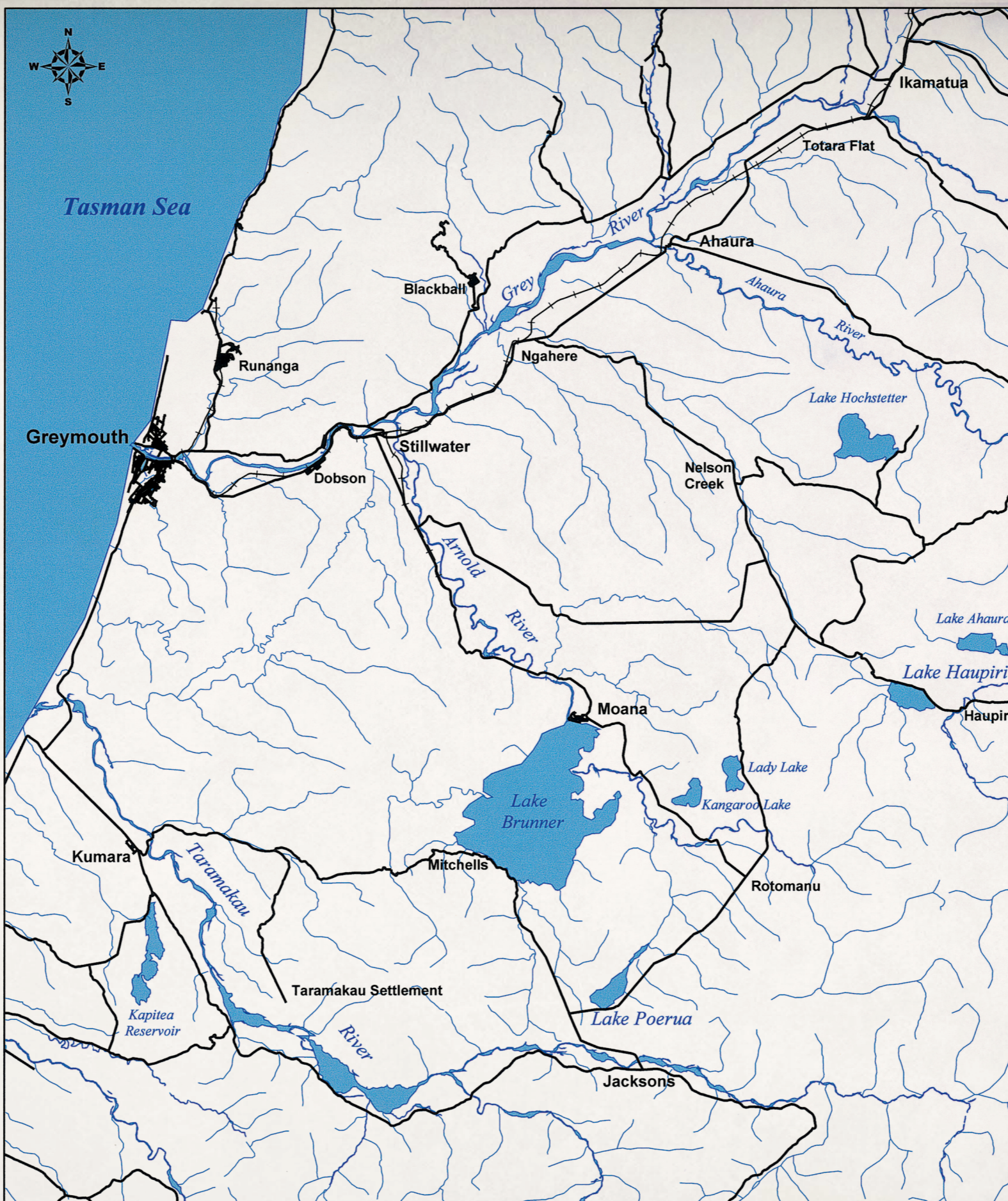
### Arnold River

The Arnold exits Lake Brunner before joining the Grey River 15kms from Greymouth at Stillwater. It holds a high population of medium sized brown trout and is usually fishable in all but extreme flows.

**Access:** Watch closely for signs at marked access points along the Arnold Valley Rd. between Stillwater and Moana.

- Kokiri Bridge adjacent to the freezing works. Access is available up and downstream.
- Old Arnold Road between the Arnold River and Arnold Valley Rd. Two access locations are marked along this road.
- Upstream of Arnold Creek (signposted).
- Below the Arnold Dam.
- Aratika, sign posted on the gate. Contact R.L. or D.M. Milne on 03 738 0038
- Arnold River Bridge near Aratika. Fish either up or downstream
- Kotoku; Turn off the road following the true right of Molloy Creek.
- Moana Footbridge at the outlet of Lake Brunner.

**Methods:** The Arnold is popular with fly anglers especially during the prolific evening hatches of Oct/Nov and March/April. Fly fishing is favoured but all methods are successful.



### Lower Grey River

Excellent access is available to the Lower Grey from roads on both sides up to Ikamatua. Popular access points are Greymouth, Omoto Racecourse, Taylorville, Stillwater Bridge, Matai, Blackball, Ahaura, Totara Flat and Ikamatua. Where the river does not run alongside the road, permission must be obtained from landowners. Please respect property, fasten gates and leave no litter.

**Methods:** Spin fishing is popular all along the mid and lower Grey River. Bait fishing is also productive in the lower river, but is best early in the season up to late November. Fly fishing is best in the evening when trout often rise to hatches at dusk. Fly fishing with nymphs can be productive during the day, particularly in shallow riffles.

### Lake Brunner

Located 25km from Greymouth. Follow SH 7 to Stillwater then turn off on to the Arnold Valley Rd to Moana. Lake Brunner holds brown trout averaging 1.1kgs and is the most popular angling water in the Region.

Foot Access is available at:

- Moana across the Arnold River foot bridge.
- Iveagh Bay, past Moana off onto Cashmere Bay Rd.
- Mitchells, a 38km drive from Moana to the South end of the Lake. Foot access is available to Carew Bay and Bain Bay via track starting at boat ramp.
- Boat Launching facilities are available at Moana, Iveagh Bay and Mitchells.

**Methods:** Successful trolling can be had along the margins of Lake Brunner, mainly from the foot of Te Kinga Hill through to Clematis Bay. Trolling near the outlet during summer is popular. Fly fishing from shore at the lake outlet during early morning or late evening, or at the mouth of Crooked and Hohonu Rivers during the day for cruising fish works well. Fly fishing from boat over the shallow weed beds between Orangipuku and Te Kinga is recommended. The best spinning is at the lake outlet or along the western shore where the water is a little deeper.



### Lake Poerua

Lake Poerua is a 24km drive from Moana or 8km from the turn off at Jacksons SH 73. Brown trout average 1.8 kgs and are normally well conditioned.

**Access:** There is only one access point for the launching of small boats. Foot access is available to the right of the boat ramp along the lake edge.

**Methods:** Trolling and harling is successful over most of the lake. Fly fishing is productive but a boat is a definite advantage. Popular locations are near the narrow neck half way down the lake and around shallow margins.

### Lake Haupiri

Haupiri contains brown trout and is located 42km from Greymouth. Follow SH7 to Ngahere, turn right onto Nelson Creek Rd.

**Access:** Foot access is limited by a forested margin and a boat is recommended. Launching ramp is located towards the eastern end of the lake.

**Methods:** Fly fishing off the mouths of the few small feeder streams located on the southern side of the lake is the most successful, followed by general trolling.